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RUNNING WITH THE GENERAL

STEER CLEAR OF OBSTACLES! (WILL OVERPLAY!)

Top News

© Sep 17, 2006 8:30 pm US/Eastern

Police: Parents Kidnap Daughter To Have Abortion 19-Year-Old Recently Told Parents She Was Pregnant

(CBS4) After disclosing to her parents that she was pregnant, a 19-year-old Maine girl was allegedly bound with rope and duct tape by the parents, who then allegedly attempted to drive the girl to an abortion clinic in New York on Friday for an emergency abortion, police said.

Katelyn Kampf, 19, was able to escape from her parents' custody when they stopped to use a restroom in Salem,

http://cbs4boston.com/topstories/local_story_259154909.html

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COERCIVE ABORTION STORIES

from www.TeenBreaks.com

On June 6, 2006, I found out I was going to be a mother. I was kind of happy but at the same time I was worried about the father of my child. We had already talked about what would happen if I was to get pregnant. I told my mom 2 weeks after I found out and she told my dad because I couldn't face him yet. I slept all day and that wasn't normal for me. I wanted to tell me babydaddy when I found out but I was scared. We both were going through some problems with the law for the same reason and we were told we couldn't have contact with each other so it made things harder. My baby was very smart and active. I felt my baby moving at 14 weeks. It was a good baby. I was young true enough but this was my baby. The decisions was up to me and the father but since we couldnt talk I had to make all of the decisions. I was forced to get an abortion by my mother. I was so hurt and didnt know what to do. I look at my ultrasound everyday. I even wrote a poem about my pregnancy and my babydaddy. Now my babydaddy and I talk almost everyday. We're together and we talk about the baby every now and then but we're more focused on our future. Although we've been through alot with each other, that only made our love for each stronger. I love him with all my heart and I always will.

[REDACTED]
13 - 15
Female

Wisconsin

Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2007 8:19 PM
To: info@teenbreaks.com
Subject: Story

- MY BOYFRIEND RAPED ME, WHEN I WAS ALMOST 14. HE WAS 17 AT THE TIME, WE WENT TO A HOUSE PARTY WITH NO ADULT SUPERVISION. AND HE GOT DRUNK, AND THING I KNEW, HE GOT ME HIGH, AND THE ONLY THING I REMEMBER, IS HIM RAPING ME. NOW I AM 14 1/2 AND REFRET EVER HAVING THE ABORTION THAT HIS MOM MADE ME DO.!!!

[REDACTED]
13 - 15
Female

Wisconsin

BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF WISCONSIN

Assembly Committee on Judiciary and Ethics on AB427

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF LUANA STOLTENBERG
Representative of Operation Outcry

September 13, 2007

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Luana Stoltenberg. I am the Iowa State Leader for Operation Outcry which is a project of The Justice Foundation in San Antonio, Texas, a nonprofit legal foundation that represents clients free of charge in landmark cases and I am here on behalf of the women of Operation Outcry. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this committee regarding this most important issue.

I would like to present to this committee over 111 sworn affidavits from the women of Operation Outcry from all across America, including Wisconsin, where the women were coerced into having an abortion. These affidavits have been collected over the last 7 years along with hundreds others and have been used as evidence in Norma McCorvey and Sandra Cano's efforts to overturn their cases which legalized abortion in 1973. (Norma McCorvey is the "Roe" of Roe v. Wade and Sandra Cano is the "Doe" of Doe v. Bolton). These affidavits have also been submitted to other state legislatures who are considering new legislation and/or bans on abortion and were submitted into the congressional record at a US Senate Judiciary Subcommittee hearing last summer. A letter brief from our Senior Staff Attorney describing the legal basis for this evidence and the process of collecting these affidavits is included with the affidavits.

I have worked with hundreds of women hurt by abortion for the past 7 years throughout this nation and internationally. These women have shared their pain, guilt, and lifelong consequences that they suffered following their abortions. These women call or write daily wanting someone to listen to their story and tell them how they can make their voice heard concerning the truth about abortion. Many of these women were coerced or forced into having abortions. We also receive calls from women looking for healing and we refer them to abortion recovery programs in their area. They all talk about how their lives are not the same, and how they have suffered from depression, anxiety, alcohol and/or substance abuse, suicidal thoughts or attempts, and problems in relationships with their husbands and/or living children.

Here are direct quotes from some of these women:

J. K. - "I felt like I had no other choice - in both cases. I was in such a panic. I needed help!"

Tracy - "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes, my mother.

Jody - "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes, the clinic nurse and doctor told me if I did not follow thru I would loose this baby and my 2 children to social services."

Jennifer - "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes, my family and the counselor at the clinic."

Patricia - "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes, birth father of baby."

Robin - "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes, my husband. He told me if I didn't he'd never come back . . ."

F.A. "Did anyone pressure you into having an abortion? Yes. The first was by my fiancé and that man became my husband d and he arranged the second one as well."

Through these affidavits you will hear testimonies of women speaking from their hearts about how abortion devastated their lives and impacted their families. Many of these women have committed their lives to speaking out publicly, as I am about this secret shame. We are hopeful that by doing so we can educate those on both sides of this issue about the consequences of abortion. Some of these women from Wisconsin are here with me today.

We believe that women are most vulnerable when pregnant particularly in an unplanned pregnancy and need maximum protection from making an uninformed or coerced decision that would terminate her relationship with her child and affect her own emotional, psychological and physical health.

These affidavits submitted today indicate that women were not given counseling nor were other options discussed with them and they all were pressured or coerced into having abortions. In all other surgical procedures, the doctor meets with the patient at least once and gives detailed information about the procedure along with options and risks and if the woman did not want the procedure, it would not be performed. A woman having an abortion seldom, if ever meets the abortionist until the procedure begins.

I, like the many women of Operation Outcry, have experienced the pain and aftermath of abortion.

I have had 3 abortions because I didn't think I had any other choices.

My first abortion was done in Madison, Wisconsin. I was 17 years young and my boyfriend told me if I didn't have the abortion that he would leave me. I thought I loved him, and I knew I could not have a baby without his help and support. So I did what I was told and went through with the abortion.

When going in for my abortion I was told by the "professionals" that it was only a blob of tissue, and it would be safer and easier to abort then to carry my baby to term. I would later find out that was a lie.

The types of abortion I had was the vacuum aspirator method. I could hear by the increased labor of the suction machine when a part or limb of my baby was being extracted. Each time I tried to look at the jar with my babies remains they would push me back down. To this day I still hear that haunting suction sound.

When it was finished I was sent to a waiting room with the other girls. I was given a cup of juice and told I could leave in 20 minutes if I felt alright. I had never felt worse but I told them I felt fine because I just wanted out of there.

On the drive home I was in extreme pain and bleeding profusely. After returning home I called them for help, but was told it wasn't their problem, to call my doctor. I was too afraid and ashamed to call the doctor so I laid there and waited and wondered if I would die.

A part of me died that day as I realized I would never hold or see that child. I became angry and depressed. I started drinking heavily; doing drugs, and became very promiscuous. I didn't think anyone would love me unless I gave them sex in return. I got pregnant two more times and choose abortion each time.

With each abortion my addictions got worse. I even attempted suicide 3 times. Because of the choices I had made my life was a mess and was spiraling out of control.

I later met and married a wonderful man. After trying to start a family with no success, we learned I was infertile because of the abortions. The suction from the vacuum aspirator destroyed my tubes and ovaries.

I had to tell my husband that because of the bad choices I had made, he would not have his own biological children.

Everyday I live with the reality that the only children I will ever bear I killed.

Today I am **still** living the effects of those abortions. A few years ago I had a hysterectomy because of the sever damage caused from the suction procedure.

The only way I have been able to live through this nightmare is because I have had the loving support of my husband, and I have come to know my Lord Jesus Christ. He has forgiven me and set me free. There has never been a day that I don't regret the "**choices**" I made to have those abortions, or think about those 3 children and who they would have been. Abortion didn't solve my problems it only created more. **I am still a mother it's just that my 3 children are dead.** I want the world to know the harmful, horrible effects of abortion and how it destroys not only a child's life, but the woman's, the families, and our whole society.



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Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 427
“Coercive Abortion Prevention Act”
Assembly Committee on Judiciary and Ethics
Thursday, September 13, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 427, the “Coercive Abortion Prevention Act.”

This bill closes a loophole in Wisconsin’s current Women’s Right To Know law by requiring the abortionist to determine whether a woman is being coerced into having an abortion; the current law has no specific requirement for the abortionist to do so. In addition, the bill requires that an abortionist must provide the woman with information on resources for victims, or potential victims, of domestic violence. This information helps provide a safety net for the woman who does not want to abort her child. It is important to remember that a genuine pro-choice position respects a woman’s decision to choose life for her unborn child.

A 2004 study published in the *Medical Science Monitor* indicated that 64 percent of American women who have had abortions reported being pressured into their abortions. Abortion is often a woman’s last choice. However, it is often the first choice for her unborn child’s father, for her employer, for her parents, for those counseling her, and for any other people in her life who would somehow be affected by her choosing life for her unborn child.

Portraits of Coercion, America’s Silent Epidemic is published by the Elliot Institute, an organization that for nearly 20 years has provided research, education and outreach on the effects of abortion on women, men, families and society. In this report, post-abortive women tell their stories. Listen to some of their comments: “I screamed that I didn’t want the abortion.” “My husband exploded in anger ... ‘Have an abortion or I’ll leave you.’” “No one told me there were places I could go for help.” “The abortionist strapped me down and said, ‘Shut up and quit that yelling.’” “All the people that mattered told me to abort. No one would help me.”

Properly understood and enforced, Wisconsin’s Coercive Abortion Prevention Act will keep these stories from becoming the stories of Wisconsin women who want to choose life for their unborn children but don’t believe they have that choice because of threats and pressure from the people whom they had expected to—and hoped would—support them in their life-affirming decision.

I urge you to vote for this bill.

Thank you.

Testimony of Jeanne Ullenberg

My name is Jeanne Ullenberg. I am here today to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 427.

While attending college at UW Oshkosh in February of 1971 I was raped by an acquaintance of my roommates. In March the school clinic doctor confirmed that I was pregnant. I consulted with the school psychologist and he asked if I felt distressed and/or afraid that I might take my life. Of course I did. I was extremely distraught. He told me that I shouldn't have to be punished for something that wasn't my fault and that he thought that terminating the pregnancy would be the best outcome for me. He told me he could arrange for an abortion for me even though it was not legal in Wisconsin unless it was considered a "threat to my life" to continue the pregnancy. It would require two other signatures besides his, one being a physician and the other a pastor. Within one month he had made the arrangements and I was scheduled for an abortion at Milwaukee Lutheran Hospital the 3rd week in May. I never met or consulted with the pastor or the physician. I went to the Hospital and was put to sleep for the procedure. I never met the attending physician or even knew who he was. One week after the abortion I broke down uncontrollably crying. I called the school psychologist and his recommendation was that I go home for the summer and recuperate, and to come back and see him every month. I did, but we never talked about the abortion except to ask "How was I recovering". The sadness continued but now we talked about my parental relationship instead. Before the beginning of the Fall Session I stopped seeing him. I felt as though no one cared about what I had been through.

I also followed up with the post abortion physical exam at the school clinic. The physician's recommendation was that I take "birth control pills" to protect myself even though I had not been sexually active. I tried taking several brands of "the pill" but was not able to because of physical complications.

I did not date for two years because I felt as though no one would want to date someone like me if they knew what had happened to me, how could *they* understand, no one else did? It was also at this time I started a 2 year long drug and alcohol use to hide the pain of the memories of all of this. I was in such conflict with myself over the values I had been brought up with and this which I had just done. After all "good girls" did not abort babies. I could also hear my mom's voice saying: "If a girl gets raped she probably deserved it." Now I became the girl who deserved to be raped and bad. Somehow, I managed to graduate from college, though not with much joy in my achievement.

In 1973 I began dating and my boyfriend and I decided to live together. I went to Planned Parenthood for birth control advice and again began trying "a new pill"...to no avail; therefore they advised using an IUD - "The Dalcon Shield." Six months later I went to Planned Parenthood for a pregnancy test ... it was positive. They urged me to have an abortion for my safety sake and "after all I had done everything possible to keep from conceiving therefore I shouldn't have to be punished by having an unwanted pregnancy". They explained the procedure to me and told me that what they would remove was only a clump of cells. It wasn't a formed child yet. I was 12 weeks pregnant. My boyfriend was not supportive and pushed for me to have the abortion or he would end our relationship. I complied, as I did not want our relationship to end, and on my 24th birthday, December 18th, I aborted. This time I was not put to sleep for the procedure and it was very painful and sickening to hear the suction. The collection container was just inches from my side. I was horrified. Within 2 weeks I again became very depressed. When I called the abortion clinic they told me it was just "hormones" and it would pass. Two weeks later I attempted to take my life with an overdose of prescription drugs and alcohol. I hated who I had become. My boyfriend assured me how much he cared for me and that he would try to make it up to me.

At my 6 weeks check up Planned Parenthood informed me that the Dalcon Shield had had a high failure rate and that they had an improved IUD, "The Copper Coil". It worked well for 2 years, and then in April of 1976 I began to cramp and spot bleed. I could not feel the string that connected to the IUD. I went to the Women's Clinic and they confirmed that the IUD had been dislodged and was in my uterus. They also told me that I was pregnant. They took an X-Ray to locate the position of the IUD, which I never saw. They told me I needed to have an abortion and a D & C that day and that continuing the pregnancy with an IUD out of place would be risky to my health and that carrying the pregnancy was also a risk to the baby. I was stunned. What else could I do? I could hardly believe what I was hearing. I consented to another abortion. They sent my boyfriend home to get the money for the abortion and a change of clothes. I was put to sleep for this one too. Through all of those tests that day I never met with a physician, although the nurses I had talked to had consulted with me as to the procedure only. When I woke up in the recovery room they told me that I had been 17 weeks pregnant. We did not know the gestational age before surgery. (Post note: I would years later meet 2 women who had had dislodged IUD's and delivered their babies. I felt so duped. Why did they lie to me and tell me to abort that child?)

At my next check-up at the Women's Health Clinic they told me that the Copper Coil had proved to not be very reliable but they had now improved it. New version: "The Copper Coil 7." I had it inserted. What else could I do? In February of 1978 was pregnant again. This time I had wanted to keep the baby and for a little while I did not tell my boyfriend about it. We were now engaged to be married, but I was afraid of what he would say. Two weeks later I did tell him, and he blew up at me. He told me he wasn't ready for a baby and we were not going to have one and if I continued to insist on having this baby he would leave me and move back with his parents, leaving me alone to figure out what I was going to do. We fought for days about this. Finally I gave up and consented to yet another abortion. He brought me to the clinic, I was put to sleep for the procedure. Once again I never met the physician. After this abortion I sunk myself into my new career and went back to school for my 2nd degree in college, and tried not to think about what had happened, hoping all was well with my relationship with my fiancée. Within one month my 5 year relationship had ended. The relationship could no longer endure the hardships.

A year and a half later I marry and 3 months later I am pregnant. I do not tell my OB-GYN that I have ever had any abortions. I am too ashamed to tell anyone how many abortions I have experienced. The pregnancy is not going well, there are some complications: I am bleeding and cramping. The doctor recommends I quit my job and prescribes bed rest. I do so until my 17th week. I am doing better. I deliver our first born child one month early, a beautiful daughter, but as I watch her lying on the warming table next to me I am swept with the memory of the children I never delivered. I think "so this is what it would have been like," and I begin to cry. I lie and tell my husband that they are tears of joy. If only he knew. He does not.

Two years later I conceive our second child, another difficult pregnancy with bed rest and I deliver our first born son one month early. Eighteen months later, I am pregnant with our third child, I miscarry this child at 12 weeks on January 10, 1985. I think that this is justified punishment for aborting so many babies.

In 1987 my husband and I separate for six months. He's going his way and me mine. I begin another relationship and use a diaphragm and foam for birth control. On May 10th, I go to Bread and Roses and they confirm my pregnancy. The next morning with little emotion but anger, I abort again. While I am on the table the cramping becomes pretty unbearable and I start to cry and my legs start shaking. The doctor tells me to "Shut up and stop whimpering so he can do his job." I lay there and clench my jaws while the tears are running down my face. It's over. I become nauseous in the recovery area and the nurse tells me "it's normal." I will bleed heavily

for the next two weeks, and when I call the clinic they tell me just to put my feet up, some women just are bleeders.

My husband and I reconcile two months later. He does not know what has happened. I would have another child in August of 1988, this time without many complications. Oddly, I remember upon his delivery the child I aborted the previous year. Why do those memories always cloud the joy of a new child in my life?

In June of 1993 my husband starts to attend some Pro-Life rallies. I am furious but he can't understand why I am so ambivalent. He keeps urging me to attend with him, so to keep peace I attend a rally with him on July 12. That night I watched a movie called "The Hard Truth". What I saw on that screen was too unbelievable for words ... babies at 10 & 12 weeks gestation torn apart ... but they had hands and fingers, and feet and perfect little toes, ears, some wonderfully formed little faces. This was NOT a clump of tissue ... a nothing. My lord what had I done? I didn't know! Why hadn't I been told the truth! I would have never allowed this to happen if I had only known. I couldn't talk, I could only weep and sob. I continued to be in a state of confusion for four days. If I told someone, who would I tell? Who would understand? I couldn't continue to hide but if I exposed myself what would people think of me? I had been silent for 21 years. And my husband, of 13 years, didn't know anything about my past in this regard ... Would he leave me? ... How could he love me if he found out? My two older children ... what would they think of their mother? I felt very, very alone once again. Fortunately, I did talk to a pro-life person at a rally a few days later. He listened, he held my hand and let me pour out my hidden most secret, my grief ... and he didn't ridicule me but hugged me and told me about the help I could get...that I was not alone in this, that there were many other women who felt and hurt the way I did. I wasn't able to tell my husband about my "real" life until two weeks later. We have gone through some hard discussions, but now he too understands.

For the past 13 years I have been a counselor at a Crisis Pregnancy Help Line and work with a support group within our Church. I am awed to see the genuine loving kindness extended toward not only women in a crisis pregnancy, but those who are in need after an abortion.

As you can see upon two occasions I felt I had no choice but to abort because of the pressure by my then boyfriend to end the pregnancy. I had no one to talk to about how I felt. No one ever asked if I was being pressured, not the doctors, not the nurses, and certainly not any of the clinic workers. When I first became aware of the Pro-Life movement in 1993, and that there were people who cared and would have helped, I was angry that no one was there for me at any

time of my life. I often wondered if the secret pain I endured all those years would have been deterred if I had been given the opportunity to speak out about my fear and the pressure I was under.

As elected officials representing womens' rights in Wisconsin, I ask that you consider the rights of women all over this state to be well informed of their "choice" about their reproductive rights. I feel no woman should be pressured by anyone, albeit a boyfriend, a parent, family member or a clinic, to abort her unborn child. This kind of coercion is tantamount to the worse kind of mental abuse a woman in a crisis pregnancy can endure. In many respects, this is not much different than being raped. I also worry that there may be underage girls that are not able to speak because of fear, and are being forced by the perpetrator to abort, thus protecting the perpetrator and not the girls. I wonder about the fathers who bring their daughters, that the girls may be victims of incest. If no one asks her how will they know to help her? You, as the people we entrust to make our laws, need to protect the women of this state to ensure they are not being coerced in any manner and get the help they truly need to make an informed choice. A choice that hopefully will not leave her emotionally and sometimes physically scarred for the rest of her life.

I urge you to vote for Assembly Bill 427. Thank you.



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TESTIMONY REGARDING ASSEMBLY BILL 427 **Presented to the Assembly Committee on Judiciary and Ethics** **September 13, 2007**

My name is Barbara Sella and I am the Associate Director for Respect Life and Social Concerns at the Wisconsin Catholic Conference. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 427.

For Catholics, being pro-life involves more than opposition to abortion. Being pro-life also involves understanding the social, economic, and psychological forces that often impel women to make such a tragic choice and then helping women to overcome these obstacles.

In his 1995 encyclical, *The Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul II underscored how "tragic and painful" the abortion decision is for many women. Often, he noted, a woman chooses abortion "out of a desire to protect certain important values such as her own health or a decent standard of living for the other members of the family. Sometimes it is feared that the child to be born would live in such conditions that it would be better if the birth did not take place. Nevertheless," he added, "these reasons and others like them, however serious and tragic, can never justify the deliberate killing of an innocent human being." (GL, 58)

But the Pope did not stop there, for in the next paragraph he went on to identify others who share moral responsibility for the woman's abortion.

As well as the mother, there are often other people too who decide upon the death of the child in the womb. In the first place, the father of the child may be to blame, not only when he directly pressures the woman to have an abortion, but also when he indirectly encourages such a decision on her part by leaving her alone to face the problems of pregnancy.... Nor can one overlook the pressures which sometimes come from the wider family circle and from friends. Sometimes the woman is subjected to such strong pressure that she feels psychologically forced to have an abortion: certainly in this case moral responsibility lies particularly with those who have directly or indirectly obliged her to have an abortion. (GL, 59)

In the end, then, moral responsibility rarely rests on the woman alone. Family members, employers, educators, health providers—all those who pressure or encourage a woman to rid herself of her child in a violent manner—share some responsibility.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAURA DENK

**To: Legislative Committee
September 13, 2007**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Laura Denk. I am a leader of Rachel's Vineyard, a national organization working with women and men who have experienced post-abortion trauma and seek healing after abortion. I am also the Director of Hartford Pregnancy Center which provides material support and counseling to women facing an unplanned pregnancy. Thank you for taking time to study this significant issue and learning the truth about the devastating effects of abortion on women and their families. I am appearing on behalf of the women and men who were too afraid or ashamed to testify themselves.

Through my work with Rachel's Vineyard, The Pregnancy Center and another abortion recovery program, "Forgiven and Set Free," I have listened to and counseled many women and men in Wisconsin. Many women who come through Rachel's Vineyard talk about their abortion decision not being their choice, but was usually made in haste, often with coercion from parents, boyfriends or significant others. These women initially made their decision based on fear, often feeling trapped, either emotionally or financially, along with the guilt and shame of being in an unplanned pregnancy. Some women immediately experience regret and guilt following their abortion. They also experience resentment of the parent, family member spouse or significant other who pressured them into the decision. One example is Jill, a 22 year old woman in Wisconsin. She contacted our office for any kind of support or assistance. She had an abortion when she was 17. Her boyfriend, who is older than her, stated that he would not support her during the pregnancy, in any way, and that she needed to have the abortion. When asked how the abortion has affected her life, Jill stated, "I have nightmares and horrible memories that are almost impossible to live with. I have never been able to get over it. I have been on medication for depression since the abortion, and would be willing to do anything to help me forget." Another example is Sarah, who was taken to the abortion facility by her parents at the age of 16. The pregnancy was never

discussed with her. She feels that no one ever gave her any other option. She was told that she was to get the abortion and get it over with. Sarah stated that she does not remember anyone talking with her, and that she cried the entire time. She has suffered from feelings of guilt, depression, remorse and anger towards those who did not give her a choice.

In the women and men I have counseled, I have seen a pattern of coercion, which ranges from persuasion, to directly telling the woman that she must have an abortion or "... I will leave you", "You will not be allowed to live here, etc." This is a very vulnerable time for women and a time where they need caring and compassion and someone who can counsel them on the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual consequences of an abortion.

At Rachel's Vineyard and other abortion recovery programs we hear about the aftermath. Some of the after effects these women experience include depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts or attempts, difficulty in relationships with husbands and/or children, over-protectiveness with living children, substance abuse, nightmares, flashbacks, and self destructive behavior, to name a few.

There are thousands of women and men who have gone through a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat or other abortion recovery programs throughout the country and the rate is increasing annually. Nearly all of these women and men, who have attended the Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, say that if they had it to do over again, they would have chosen life. These same women and men, many times, did not fully understand, nor were they fully informed of the devastating consequences they would experience as a result of ending their child's life. Many women have stated that they do not remember receiving any type of counseling regarding these issues.

Rachel's Vineyard retreats are also available for men and grandparents who have suffered and we hear stories of pain and regret from grandparents and fathers who, thinking they were doing what was best for the woman, coerced her into abortion. One final example of this is Matt. He is a 22 year old man who contacted our office looking for some help. He stated that he had convinced his girlfriend to have an abortion. Matt and his girlfriend were 17 at the time. Matt stated that he cannot stop thinking about the horrible mistake that he made. He has been hospitalized for depression and suicide

attempts. He realizes now that he never gave his girlfriend any other option and feels responsible for the abortion.

In closing, we need to protect women from being pressured into making a decision that will seriously impact the rest of their lives. Since abortion is legal, many parents, boyfriends and spouses feel justified in pressuring for abortion, but instead, they are influencing a woman at her most vulnerable time and often making her feel trapped and hopeless. We need to ensure that all women are given the facts and are consenting of their own free will with a clear understanding of all the implications. Let's protect our women from coercion and misinformation. Please support this bill.
